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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/12/2016

TAGS: PREL BA IZ REGION

SUBJECT: IRAQ NEIGHBOR'S MEETING FALLS FLAT

Classified By: Ambassador William T. Monroe. Reason: 1.4 (B)(D)

¶1. (C) Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa told the Ambassador that the July 8-9 Iraq neighbors meeting in Tehran was a predictably uneventful affair. He said that he and his Iraqi and Kuwaiti counterparts left unhappy with the way the Iranians ran the meeting, especially their lack of consultation with Iraqi Foreign Minister Zebari. During the meeting, Shaikh Khalid raised the need to improve controls at Iraq's borders, saying this is the responsibility of the coalition forces, the Iraqi government, and the bordering countries. He said that the Iranians were clearly not comfortable at his stress on controlling infiltration at all borders. Discussion of the issue was deferred to an upcoming meeting of Iraq neighbors Ministers of Interior, to be held in Riyadh.

¶2. (C) It was decided to hold the next Foreign Ministers meeting of Iraq's neighbors in Iraq. This generated some discussion, Shaikh Khalid said, among the Ministers about the safety of hosting the meeting in Baghdad. Zebari insisted it would be safe, noting that President Bush had recently visited the Iraqi capital.

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